

RECRUITING TEACHERS INTO A CAREER AS SCHOOL COUNSELOR IN A SCHOOL REFORM ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

One of the most critical responsibilities accorded to educational leaders and administrators is the task of planning the staffing of schools and school districts with the qualified professionals required to deliver high quality educational programs (Rebore, 2001; Young & Castetter, 2004). However, recruiting qualified teachers, school counselors, and administrators is increasingly problematic because of the large number of retirements occurring among members of the post-World War II “baby boom” generation (U.S. Department of Labor, 2000). Despite the increasing challenges posed by personnel recruitment, many school districts still fail to give this important administrative task the attention and planning it deserves. As Rebore (2001) cautioned, “[i]t is a mistake to assume that the correct mix of people will be available to fill vacancies without making a concerted effort to find the most qualified individuals to fill specific human resource needs” (p. 91).

This study addressed recruiting qualified school counselors to staff schools in the 27th largest school district in the United States, a district located in a state (Kentucky) undergoing systemic school reform that requires school counselors to be key players in assisting teachers and administrators in the task of improving student achievement. Recruitment officials at the research site commissioned the researchers to undertake this investigation because of the growing difficulty experienced by district recruiters in generating adequate pools of qualified applicants to fill counselor vacancies, especially at the high school level. In the recruitment cycle prior to this study, district recruiters failed to fill all counselor vacancies in time for the start of the new school year. This phenomenon of insufficient applicants for school counselor vacancies is emerging also as a significant problem at the national level (Klaus, 2003).

The current educational recruitment environment is partly attributable to macro-recruitment factors that are largely out of school district control. School districts have little near-term possibility of impacting macro-recruitment factors (e.g., “baby boom” retirements) affecting the prevailing national labor supply of personnel qualified to fill critical position vacancies. However, school districts do have opportunities to address micro-recruitment factors that fall within school district control.

Micro-recruitment factors include the specific recruitment practices and actions implemented by schools and school districts to fill position vacancies. We believe school districts can mitigate the impact of macro-factors by attending to micro-factors such as improved human resources planning and application of increased resources and expertise to the task of recruiting needed personnel such as school counselors. Relative to the need to re-double micro-recruitment efforts, Young and Castetter (2004) stated:

Because of changing labor market conditions for many individuals as job candidates, school districts must compete both with other organizations and with other school districts for . . . applicants. To compete successfully, school districts must become proficient in attracting and selecting . . . the most capable personnel. (p. 90)

Although conducting research about the individuals the organization intends to recruit and hire, especially their job-related needs and preferences, would seem to be an obvious personnel need, the education literature is devoid of such research relating to the specific task of recruiting school counselors.

Problem

Nationally, school counselors are in short supply, and the educators currently employed as counselors are struggling with large numbers of students to serve while, simultaneously, attempting to deal with increased administrative duties that do not necessarily focus on the counseling function (Klaus, 2003; Portman, 2002). The problem is especially acute at the high school level, with little more than half the number of secondary school counselors being available to meet the American School Counselor Association (1999) recommendation of one counselor for every 250 students (Klaus, 2003; Davis & Craig, 1986).

Exacerbating the counselor shortage, impacted by the increased rate of retirements among school counselors (Towner-Larsen, 2000), is the concomitant issue of counselors being assigned to perform work tasks (e.g., maintaining school records, administering standardized achievement tests, performing general clerical duties) other than counseling duties (Bemak, 2000; Coll & Freeman, 1997; DeMato & Curcio, 2004; Hardesty & Dillard, 1994; Morse & Russell, 1988; Napierkowski & Parsons, 1995).

Having teachers participate in this study was appropriate because of the requirements to become a school counselor in Kentucky. The requirements are as follows (Education Professional Standards Board, 2004): (a) complete a teacher preparation program, (b) receive state-approved teacher certification, (c) gain experience as a classroom teacher, (d) complete a counselor preparation program, and (e) obtain state-approved counselor certification. This lengthy process may contribute to the problem of generating adequate applicant pools for counseling vacancies. However, this approach to preparing counselors has a rationale that relates to the issue of school reform.

The above certification approach is a statewide policy, mandated by state education statutes and regulations (Kentucky Department of Education, 1996; Education Professional Standards Board, 2004). Schools at the research site, and throughout Kentucky, are undergoing systemic school reform under mandates of the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), one of the most comprehensive school reform programs in the United States. Among the highest priorities of the reform program are enhancing classroom instruction and improving student performance, as measured by standardized student achievement tests (Kentucky Depart-

ment of Education, 2004). Given these priorities, state education policy makers desire that counselors be trained in such areas as instructional methods, student assessment, and learning theory. Exceptional emphasis is placed on counselors collaborating with teachers to improve student learning. The above type of training is most readily available in teacher preparation programs and on-the-job training while performing classroom instruction. This instructional orientation contrasts with the mental-health model of counseling operant in Kentucky, and other states, prior to the advent of the current school reform movement (Napierkowski & Parsons, 1995). At the research site, school counselors refer students with serious mental health issues to outside mental health agencies (L. Miller, personal communication, June 17, 2003).

Purpose

One purpose of this study was to use the recruitment simulation technique (Rynes, 1991; Rynes & Lawler, 1983)—a methodology proven effective for teacher and administrator recruitment in the education sector (e.g., Young, Rinehart, & Heneman, 1993) but used in this research for the first time in the counselor recruitment context—to gauge the attraction of a broad pool of potential job applicants (i.e., teachers) to the job of school counselor. Accomplishing this purpose would assist recruiters in (a) better targeting potential applicants; (b) constructing recruitment media that are effective in attracting teachers to a career in counseling; and, ultimately, (c) generating better applicant pools for position vacancies. A detailed description of the recruitment simulation technique is in the methods section of this article.

A second purpose of this study was to identify aspects of the job of counselor that teachers find either attractive or unattractive so that school district policy makers have options for restructuring the job of counselor to make the position more attractive to potential job applicants. Job restructuring holds potential for both improving recruitment outcomes and improving counselor retention.

Research Questions

The research questions supporting the purposes outlined above were as follows.

1. How many teachers in the district are interested in attending an orientation session to learn more about a career as school counselor?
2. To what degree are teachers interested in performing counselor job duties, both counseling and non-counseling in nature?
3. How does teacher satisfaction with job facets common to both the job of teaching and the job counseling impact the likelihood of teachers transitioning into counseling?

4. What aspects of being a school counselor do teachers perceive as being most rewarding?
5. What job factors do teachers perceive as being barriers to becoming a school counselor?
6. What recommendations do teachers have for making the job of school counselor more attractive to teachers?
7. Which factors predict teacher attraction to a position as school counselor as depicted in a simulated counselor job description?

Methods

The design for this study involved four analytical procedures: (a) descriptive statistics to profile the study participants and gauge their interest in attending an orientation session to learn about a career as school counselor; (b) independent samples *t*-tests and one-way ANOVAs to assess group mean differences in teacher ratings of a counselor position associated with teacher characteristics such as gender and school assignment (elementary, middle school, high school); (c) paired-samples *t*-tests to measure group mean differences for teacher current job satisfaction with job factors (common to both teaching and counseling) compared with teacher expected job satisfaction with those same factors in the job of school counselor; and, finally, (d) stepwise multiple regression analysis (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) to identify predictors of teacher attraction to a job as school counselor.

Sample and Participants

The participants ($N = 553$) were elementary, middle school, and high school teachers from the 27th largest school district in the United States (enrollment = 97,000) located in a large metropolitan area in the Midwest. The participants volunteered to take part in the study, and were working at schools selected by the researchers to reflect the diversity of the district in terms of such factors as socio-economic status of the students, gender and ethnicity of the teachers, and years of teaching experience of the instructional staff.

The researchers administered the instruments in person prior to regularly scheduled faculty meetings. The researchers collected data at all school levels: elementary ($n = 5$), middle school ($n = 5$), and high school ($n = 5$). The participating schools differed from the actual distribution of schools (elementary = 66%, middle school = 18%, high school = 16%) to produce a larger sampling of high school teachers because, as reported in the counseling literature (Klaus, 2003), the counseling shortage is most acute at the high school level. The 15 schools represented 10% of the schools in the district. A total of 553 teachers volunteered to take part in the study, which was 9.2% of the teachers employed in the district. Poten-

tial participants received an invitation to participate in a 15-minute survey session. Attendance at the session and completion of the instrument (as stated explicitly in an advised consent survey preamble) were both voluntary and confidential. The participation rate was 88%.

The minimum sample size required for this study was based on a power analysis conducted according to procedures developed by Cohen (1988). The parameters of the power analysis were: a medium effect size ($R^2 = .13$), a planned alpha level ($\alpha = .05$), and a minimum level of power ($1-\beta = .80$). The minimum sample size determined by the power analysis was 465. The actual sample obtained ($N = 553$) exceeded this criterion by 19%.

Independent Variables

For the paired *t*-test procedure comparing participant group mean scores for current versus expected job satisfaction relative to seven job factors (e.g., hours worked per week), the independent variable was job satisfaction (current, expected) and rating of the job factor was the dependent variable. For the independent-samples *t*-tests and the one-way ANOVA procedures, the independent variables were teacher characteristics such as gender and school assignment (elementary, middle school, high school). The dependent variable for these procedures was applicant rating of a counselor position (see next section).

For the stepwise multiple regression analysis, there were three categories of independent variables: (a) teacher characteristics, (b) composite scales for current and expected job satisfaction relating to job factors common to both teaching and counseling, and (c) ratings for five counseling job-specific predictor variables.

The composite scales were additive composite scores for current job satisfaction in the position of teaching and expected job satisfaction in the job of counselor. The composite scores for job factors common to both teaching and counseling related to seven job factors (e.g., vacation time, time with family, hours worked per week). Coefficient alpha for the seven-item additive composite score for current job satisfaction was .80 and coefficient alpha for the seven-item additive composite score for expected job satisfaction in the job of school counselor was .90, both highly reliable scales by accepted psychometric standards (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Primary Dependent Variable of Interest

The primary dependent variable of interest in this study was applicant rating of a school counselor position as depicted on a simulated counselor job description. The rating was a two-item additive composite score with 5-point Likert-type scales (1 = very unlikely to accept, 5 = very likely to accept). The two items were: (a) "If offered, how likely would you be to accept an interview for the school counselor job described?" and (b) "If offered, how likely would you be to accept the school counselor job described?"

Instruments

There were three research instruments: a biographical data form, a counselor survey questionnaire, and a simulated counselor job description instrument. The counselor survey contained three sections. The first section captured participant ratings for interest in performing counselor job-specific duties (e.g., providing counseling and mentoring to students). Some of these duties were non-counseling tasks but were required of counselors working in the focal district (e.g., performing special education paperwork). The participants rated their interest in performing job duties on 5-point Likert-type scales (1 = not at all interested, 5 = very interested).

The second section of the survey required the participants to (a) rate their satisfaction with job factors related to both teaching and counseling in their current teaching positions and (b) rate their expected satisfaction with these same job factors if they were to assume a position as school counselor. The job factors rated included mainly extrinsic factors such as vacation time, time with family, and hours worked per week. The participants rated their current and expected satisfaction using 5-point Likert-type scales (1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = extremely satisfied).

The third section of the survey contained three open-ended questions: (a) "Based on what you know about school counseling, what would you identify as being the most rewarding aspects of working as a school counselor?" (b) "In your opinion, what are the greatest barriers preventing teachers from considering a career as a school counselor?" and (c) "What recommendations would you give to make the profession of school counseling more attractive to teachers?"

The job description instrument contained a simulated job description for a counselor position based on actual job descriptions used at the research site. The instructions for the job description instrument required the study participants to assume they were "at a point of time in the future when you have earned counselor certification" and role-play as applicants for a counselor position depicted in the simulated job description. After reading the job description, the participants rated the job using two items (see Primary Dependent Variable of Interest section above). After rating the job, the participants responded to the following question: "If invited, how likely are you to attend a (district name) orientation session for teachers to learn about a career in school counseling?" (1 = very unlikely to attend, 5 = very likely to attend).

A panel of experts ($N = 6$) knowledgeable about school counseling assisted in the process of developing validated content for the survey instrument and the job description instrument. The scales used for the survey rating items derived from previous research that rendered high levels of rating item reliability for research similar to this study (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992; Gable & Wolf, 1993).

Prior to actual data collection, the researchers pilot tested the instruments with a group of teachers ($N = 24$). The participants completed the survey twice as part of a test-retest procedure to (a) assess the coeffi-

cient of stability of the items on the questionnaire and (b) compute coefficient alpha to assess the two-item additive composite scale measuring the primary dependent variable of interest (i.e., rating of a counselor position). The test-retest analysis resulted in revisions of the questionnaire, with items failing to render an acceptable coefficient of stability being dropped from the instrument. The final survey instrument contained five reliable counselor job-specific items describing the job duties of counseling and seven items measuring satisfaction with job factors common to both teaching and counseling.

Results

Descriptive statistics for the study participants appear in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Study Participants (N = 553)

Variable	n	%	Mean	SD	Range
Age			40.9	10.8	21–69
Gender					
Male	171	30.9			
Female	382	69.1			
Dependent children			1.0	1.3	0–11
Ethnicity					
White	458	82.8			
Minority	95	17.2			
Teaching experience			12.9	9.8	1–38
District experience			10.4	9.2	1–38
Highest degree earned					
BS/BA	106	19.2			
MS/MA	276	49.9			
Masters + 30 hrs	163	29.5			
Doctorate	8	1.4			
School enrollment			1,068.5	470.5	420–1,850
School assignment					
Elementary	162	29.3			
Middle School	113	20.4			
High School	278	50.3			

The mean age of the participating teachers was 40.9. Sixty-nine percent were female and 82.8% were White. These data closely paralleled demographic statistics for the national cadre of teachers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002).

A summary for the item that queried the participants about their potential interest in attending an orientation session to learn more about a career as school counselor is in Table 2. As can be seen from the data in Table 2, 36.5% of the teachers rated attending an orientation session at 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale (5 being most favorable), suggesting use of an orientation session to recruit teachers into a career as school counselor could be a promising recruitment practice.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Rating Item About Attending a Counselor Orientation Session (N = 553)

If invited, how likely are you to attend a (district name) orientation session for teachers to learn about a career in school counseling?

	Very unlikely to attend					Very likely to attend
	1	2	3	4	5	
Frequency	179	73	99	93	109	
Percent	32.4	13.2	17.9	16.8	19.7	
Mean	2.8					
(SD)	(1.5)					

Reliability for the two-item additive composite scale used to measure the primary dependent variable of interest (counselor job rating) was .95, a highly reliable composite measure (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The procedures used to analyze differences in group mean scores, with the two-item composite for counselor job rating serving as the dependent variable, were the independent-samples *t*-test and one-way analysis of variance. There were no significant group mean differences for factors such as gender (male, female), ethnicity (White, minority), and school assignment (elementary, middle school, high school). These results suggested the above factors are not useful as a basis for targeting teachers for counselor recruitment.

The procedure used to analyze differences in group mean scores in comparing current job satisfaction as a teacher with expected job satisfaction in the job of school counselor, relative to job factors common to both positions, was the paired-samples *t*-test. The results of this analysis are in Table 3. For the following six job factors, the study participants perceived they would be more satisfied in the job of teacher than in the job of school counselor: vacation time, time with family, summer income, hours worked per week, experiencing varied activities, opportunity to serve others, and recognition received for doing a good job.

Table 3

*Comparing Current and Expected Job Satisfaction, Paired t-Test Results
(N = 553)*

Item	Current mean	Expected mean	t-Value
1. Vacation time	4.3	3.2	19.3*
2. Time w/ family	3.7	3.0	12.0*
3. Summer income	3.4	3.1	3.7*
4. Hours per week	3.4	2.9	9.0*
5. Varied activities	3.7	3.4	4.7*
6. Serve others	4.2	3.9	5.7*
7. Recognition	3.3	3.3	-0.6

* $p < .0001$

The regression analysis addressed the joint impact of teacher characteristics, job factors common to both teaching and counseling, and counseling job-specific factors. The results of the regression analysis are in Table 4.

Table 4

Stepwise Multiple Regression of Predictor Variables on Counselor Job Rating

Variable	β	t-Value
Teacher characteristics		
District experience	-.17	-5.1 **
Common job factor satisfaction scales		
Current satisfaction	-.09	-2.4 *
Expected satisfaction	.21	5.3 **
Counseling job-specific factors		
Special education paperwork	.08	2.1 *
Administration	.20	4.3 **
Testing/Assessment	.11	2.3 *
Counsel/Mentor	.18	4.4 **

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .0001$.
Full Model: $R^2 = .40$ [$F(7, 545) = 52.2$], $p < .0001$
Adjusted- $R^2 = .39$

As the data in Table 4 indicate, one teacher characteristic, both the current

and the expected job satisfaction composite scales, and four of the five counseling job-specific factors predicted significant variance in teacher rating of a school counselor position. Holding all other factors in the regression equation constant, the relationships of teaching experience in the district and current job satisfaction with job rating were significant inverse relationships. As experience and current job satisfaction increased, job ratings decreased. The other significant predictor variables (i.e., expected job satisfaction, special education paperwork, administration, testing/assessment, and counseling/mentoring) had positive relationships with job ratings. As scores on these predictor variables increased, job ratings also increased. The total regression model, as indicated by adjusted- R^2 , explained 39% of the variance in job ratings, a large effect size according to effect size criteria explicated by Cohen (1988, pp. 412–414).

Responses to the open-ended questions rendered findings useful for determining how teachers perceive counseling as a career option. A summary of the open-ended responses is in Table 5.

Table 5

Responses to Three Open-Ended Questions

Based on what you know about school counseling, what would you identify as being the most rewarding aspects of working as a school counselor?

1. Working with students in a counseling mode (343)
2. Helping students solve problems and become successful (200)
3. Getting to know students in a more personal way (31)
4. Helping at risk students stay in school (24)

In your opinion, what are the greatest barriers preventing teachers from considering a career as a school counselor?

1. Excessive paperwork and time spent on non-counseling duties (274)
2. Extra coursework needed to become certified for the job (113)
3. Low pay (22)

What recommendations would you give to make the profession of school counseling more attractive to teachers?

1. Restructure the job to provide more time to spend on counseling duties (191)
2. Reduce excessive paperwork (90)
3. Provide greater administrative support or assign non-counseling duties to other personnel (59)
4. Increase salary (28)
5. Decrease the student counselor ratio (16)

Note. Numbers after responses represent frequency of response.

The respondents focused on relatively few issues, suggesting there may be wide consensus among teachers regarding the issues related to counseling. In Table 5, we report only comments made at least 10 times. Three hundred and forty-three teachers (62.0%) identified providing counseling and mentoring to students as the most rewarding aspect of counseling. Two-hundred and seventy-four participants (49.5%) cited excessive paperwork and time spent on non-counseling duties (e.g., special education paperwork) as major barriers to entering the counseling profession. Relative to restructuring the job to make counseling more attractive to teachers, 191 participants (34.5%) recommended restructuring the job to provide more time for counselors to spend on counseling duties as opposed to non-counseling duties.

Discussion

The findings described above provide guidance to school district officials interested in planning staffing needs, recruiting school counselors from the ranks of teachers, and restructuring the job of school counselor to make the position more attractive to teachers as potential applicants for counselor vacancies.

Implications for Recruitment

Several opportunities emerge from the descriptive phase of the data analysis relative to planning future recruitment efforts. As is the case with the teaching profession, counseling is a highly feminized profession. Sixty-nine percent of the participants were women. The field of education has developed historically with certain jobs considered as being a role for women (e.g., teaching and counseling) and other jobs (e.g., principalship and superintendency) considered as being roles for men (Glazer, 1991; Shakeshaft, 1989). Allowing these stereotypical perceptions to persist runs counter to the staffing imperative that educational administrators fill position vacancies with the best qualified individuals regardless of their demographic characteristics (Rebore, 2001; Young & Castetter, 2004). Educational leaders should strive to eliminate the historical gender stereotypes that persist relative to the roles of men and women in education.

Accomplishing movement towards greater gender balance would create the recruitment opportunity of attracting more men into the counseling profession, thus, reducing the existing counselor shortage and providing students at all school levels with greater numbers of male role models. A similar opportunity appears to exist relative to ethnicity. Only 17.2% of the participants were minority personnel, while over 30% of the students in the focal district are members of minority groups.

We emphasize that recruiting counselors from the broad pool of teachers does not require recruiters to replicate the gender or ethnic distribution of the teacher pool. To the contrary, this study demonstrates it is possible to identify a large number of potential applicants, men for example, who can become the focus of recruitment programs. It is possible (see

next paragraph) that as many as 62 male participants in this study (.365 x 171) might be interested in learning more about a career in counseling, thus, presenting an opportunity to improve the gender balance among counselors.

A positive finding from the descriptive analysis is that 36.5% of the participants gave high ratings for the survey item related to attending an orientation session to learn about a career in school counseling. This finding appears to be a clear recruitment opportunity that deserves follow-up in the form of planning and implementing sessions designed to inform interested teachers about counseling, and use information gained from the present investigation to plan and construct recruitment media (e.g., recruitment web-sites, job brochures, position announcements, recruitment videos, recruitment interviews) designed to recruit teachers into the counseling profession. The inferential statistical analysis discussed below suggests additional factors, both positive and negative, that should guide the planning of counselor recruitment among teachers.

The regression results summarized in Table 4 also have implications for recruitment practice. Years of teaching experience in the district and current job satisfaction are negative correlates of teacher rating of a counselor job. This finding suggests that the more experienced teachers are, the less likely they are to consider a career transition into school counseling. Also, the more satisfied teachers are in their current positions, the less likely they are to transition into a career as school counseling. Given these results, district recruiters should concentrate primarily on recruiting younger teachers who are at earlier stages of their careers as educators and are less satisfied in their current jobs as measured, perhaps, by the instruments developed for this study.

The significant predictors reported in Table 4 indicate recruiters should target teachers who: (a) expect to be satisfied in the job of counseling, measured by rating items such as those developed for this research; (b) are not unduly adverse to special education paperwork; (c) desire an opportunity to perform administrative job duties; (d) express willingness to support testing and assessment activities; and (e) desire to provide students with counseling and mentoring services. As teacher scores on the above variables increase, teacher attraction to a job as school counselor also increases. Recruiters could use the survey questionnaire developed for this research at orientation sessions to identify those teachers in attendance who rate the five significant predictors highest, and target these individuals for additional recruitment activities.

An additional implication of this study relates to the policy, however well justified by school reform imperatives and policy maker preferences, of requiring individuals desiring a career in counseling to become a teacher first. An alternative approach might be to form cooperative arrangements between school districts, professional standards boards, and universities (e.g., psychology and counseling departments) to recruit counselors from undergraduate programs into counseling, thus, shortening the counseling certification process by years and greatly reducing the cost of earning certification. In addressing a shortage of personnel, it is

only good recruitment practice to address as many potential pools of qualified applicants as possible (Rynes, 1991; Young & Castetter, 2004).

Implications for Job Restructuring

Where teachers are concerned, the position of school counselor suffers from negative perceptions which recruitment officials may want to address to make the position more attractive to teachers. The job factors that teachers find unattractive relate to the requirement at the research site to perform non-counseling work duties and clerical tasks. District officials can consider these findings in planning job restructuring strategies to make counseling more attractive to teachers and, potentially, improve counselor retention. The district where this research occurred is experimenting with restructuring the job of principal in a way that might also apply to restructuring the job of counselor. As a pilot test, the district hired and trained school administrative managers (SAMs) to relieve principals of various school management responsibilities and paperwork so principals can concentrate on the highest-priority principal duty related to school reform: instructional leadership focused on improving teaching and student achievement (Slusher, 2004). An individual such as a SAM could well take on administrative duties and paperwork currently performed by counselors, thereby also freeing up counselors to perform counseling duties focused on helping students achieve at higher levels. This form of job restructuring addresses the recommendations made by the study participants (see Table 5) and conforms to what counseling researchers (e.g., Napierkowski & Parsons, 1995) recommend.

Implications for Future Research

This study uncovered a degree of perceived negativity among teachers, as potential applicants for counselor vacancies, relative to certain aspects of the job of counseling. Future research might simulate restructuring the job of school counselor and, via the recruitment simulation technique employed in this study, present a group of potential job applicants with two contrasting counselor job descriptions. One job description should reflect the job as teachers currently observe it in practice. The other job description should depict the position as having been restructured to eliminate some of the job duties (e.g., non-counseling job duties) teachers find unattractive. Such a study, might involve a between-within experimental design with counselor job duties serving as the within-groups factor and other job-related variables (e.g., salary, work hours) serving as the between-groups factors. Research along these lines would provide more insights about practices that might lead to success in recruiting teachers into the profession of school counselor.

A major purpose, and research advancement, of this study was to demonstrate the applicability of the recruitment simulation methodology to recruiting counselors. This study successfully applied the simulation technique in a new context (i.e., counselor recruitment). We recommend

researchers replicate this study in other regions of the country to assess the teacher cadre for the purposes of counselor recruitment.

Future research should also include field survey research, with practicing counselors serving as study participants. Counselors becoming dissatisfied with the job and exiting the profession prematurely contributes to the growing counselor shortage. Future counselor studies should identify those aspects of counseling that practicing counselors find attractive or unattractive. This information would (a) inform district officials about planning and constructing recruitment media (e.g., job postings, position advertisements, recruitment web-sites, recruitment interviews) that are maximally effective in attracting practicing counselors to counselor vacancies, and (b) provide information to make the job of counseling more satisfying as a strategy for improving counselor retention.

Conclusion

The emerging national shortage of school counselors makes counselor recruitment a priority administrative task for school leaders. And yet, a review of the education literature reveals almost no empirical research about developing the information base required to plan effective recruitment of counselors. The research methods demonstrated in this study provide educational leaders and researchers with an approach for addressing the issue of recruiting teachers into the counseling profession. Recruiting qualified counselors is an essential part of delivering a quality educational program. It is hoped the findings from this research will stimulate additional research about counselor recruitment and, thereby, contribute to improving the quality of the counseling services and the educational programs provided to students enrolled in the nation's public schools.

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